

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

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1. A character string processing apparatus
converting a character string encoded by a first
encoding method to a second encoding method selected
from a plurality of encoding methods, the character
10 string processing apparatus comprising:

an encoding method determination part that
selects the encoding methods, obtains, with respect
to each selected encoding method, at least one of
number information and position information of one or
15 more replacement codes at a time of converting the
character string using the selected encoding method,
and determines the second encoding method based on at
least one of the number information and the position
information.

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2. The character string processing
apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said

encoding method determination part selects the encoding methods according to an order, and if the at least one of the number information and the position information of the replacement codes at a time of 5 converting the character string using the selected encoding method fails to meet a predetermined standard, selects a next one of the encoding methods.

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3. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said encoding method determination part selects the 15 encoding methods according to an order of priority, and if the at least one of the number information and the position information of the replacement codes at a time of converting the character string using the selected encoding method fails to meet a 20 predetermined standard, selects a next one of the encoding methods.

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4. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the order of priority of the encoding methods varies depending on a language set as a display language of an operations panel.

10 5. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 3, wherein the order of priority of the encoding methods varies depending on a language set as a display language of a client that has given an instruction to convert the character string.

20 6. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said encoding method determination part determines the second encoding method based on an order of priority of the encoding methods if said encoding method determination part is prevented from determining the

second encoding method on the at least one of the number information and the position information of the replacement codes.

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7. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein said 10 encoding method determination part determines the selected encoding method as the second encoding method if the at least one of the number information and the position information of the replacement codes at the time of converting the character string using 15 the selected encoding method meets the predetermined standard.

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8. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein each of the replacement codes is a character code replacing a character in the character string which character is 25 inconvertible using the selected encoding method.

9. A character string processing apparatus that, using a first character string encoded by a first encoding method, collates a second character string encoded by a second encoding method, the 5 character string processing apparatus comprising:

a character string collation part that converts the second character string to the first encoding method, and at a time of collating the converted second character string with the first 10 character string, treats a replacement code included in the converted second character string as a character having a role of representing any character.

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10. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising a storage part storing the second character string 20 before being encoded by the second encoding method,

wherein the second character string before being encoded by the second encoding method stored in said storage part is used when the second character string is collated with the first character string.

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11. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, further comprising a table in which of characters encoded by the first encoding method, a character to which different character codes are assigned is set.

10 12. The character string processing apparatus as claimed in claim 9, wherein the replacement code is a character code replacing a character in the second character string which character is invertible to the first encoding
15 method.

20 13. A character string processing method converting a character string encoded by a first encoding method to a second encoding method selected from a plurality of encoding methods, the character string processing method comprising the steps of:
25 (a) selecting the encoding methods;

(b) obtaining, with respect to each selected encoding method, at least one of number information and position information of one or more replacement codes at a time of converting the character string
5 using the selected encoding method; and
(c) determining the second encoding method based on at least one of the number information and the position information.

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14. The character string processing method as claimed in claim 13, wherein each of the
15 replacement codes is a character code replacing a character in the character string which character is inconvertible to the selected encoding method.

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15. A character string processing method that, using a first character string encoded by a first encoding method, collates a second character
25 string encoded by a second encoding method, the

character string processing method comprising the steps of:

(a) converting the second character string to the first encoding method; and

5 (b) collating the converted second character string with the first character string, treating a replacement code included in the converted second character string as a character having a role of representing any character.

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16. The character string processing method
15 as claimed in claim 15, wherein the replacement code is a character code replacing a character in the second character string which character is
inconvertible to the first encoding method.

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17. An image-forming apparatus including a character string processing part converting a
25 character string encoded by a first encoding method

to a second encoding method selected from a plurality of encoding methods, the image-forming apparatus comprising:

an encoding method determination part that
5 selects the encoding methods, obtains, with respect to each selected encoding method, at least one of number information and position information of one or more replacement codes at a time of converting the character string using the selected encoding method,
10 and determines the second encoding method based on at least one of the number information and the position information.

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18. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 17, wherein each of the replacement codes is a character code replacing a character in the
20 character string which character is inconvertible to the selected encoding method.

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19. An image-forming apparatus including a character string processing part that, using a first character string encoded by a first encoding method, collates a second character string encoded by a 5 second encoding method, the image-forming apparatus comprising:

a character string collation part that converts the second character string to the first encoding method, and at a time of collating the 10 converted second character string with the first character string, treats a replacement code included in the converted second character string as a character having a role of representing any character.

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20. The image-forming apparatus as claimed in claim 19, wherein the replacement code is a 20 character code replacing a character in the second character string which character is inconvertible to the first encoding method.